OBJECTION to The Narrabri Gas Project
Judith Leslie 339 the Inlet Road BULGA 2330

The Turnbull Government is dominated by climate science deniers and by the coal and gas lobbies, and is doing its best to avoid any action that would offend either group.

As emissions are stalling or dropping in other countries around the world, appallingly, emissions are up 7.5% in Australia since the carbon price was removed

*The Government target of 26-28% emission reductions below 2005 levels by 2030 is too low to limit warming to 2°C, and is equivalent to a level of global action that would result in 3-4°C of global warming.

The time for Australia to rapidly transition to a fossil-fuel free economy is NOW, not at some future date.

Australia has the right climate and the “smarts” to both turn Australia in to cleaner and safer country as well as exporting renewable technologies instead of coal and gas both of which contribute excessively to GHG emissions and subsequent climate change.

The erroneous concept that gas is “cleaner” only applies if fugitive emissions are subtracted. Fugitive emissions are a major problem both for gas and open-cut coal mining. Such emissions contribute more than twenty times the GHG effect of CO2 and totally nullify any of the claimed benefits of gas. Of course, the majority of Australian gas is liquified and exported, Australian citizens are left to deal with fugitive emissions but their effect on climate is global.

Extracting gas in the Pilliga and desecrating more of Australia’s natural landscape is not the answer.

Australia is well-placed to become a renewable energy superpower. As countries shift from fossil fuels to renewables a huge opportunity exists to supply renewable solutions, but this window will close as the replacement of fossil fuels with renewables nears completion. To benefit from the energy transition businesses and nations must invest during this wave of change, and Australia is well placed with plentiful access to renewable resources.

A COMPANY which helps keep the neon burning bright in the casino capital Las Vegas is planning a series of solar power plants across Queensland, creating more than 20,000 construction jobs.

SolarReserve is scouting sites for up to half a dozen solar thermal stations, each of which generate enough electricity for 90,000 homes.

A better way to develop power in NSW is available let’s take a look at The Hunter’s enviable position for the development of renewable power.

Newcastle University is home to the “Priority Research Centre for Organic Photovoltaics” where solar paint has been developed as well as other printable photovoltaics opening up the possibility of utilising numerous surfaces as PV receptors.

The CSIRO Energy Centre at Steel River is home to the National Solar Energy centre; here heliostats concentrate solar energy to the point where it can produce super critical steam to power turbines similar to the those powered by coal.

Newcastle TAFE is ahead of the game in introducing an Associate Degree in Applied Engineering (Renewable Energy Technologies) to produce the graduates needed in the low (or no) emission world of the future.

The University and TAFE have partnered in a research facility (at Moree) to develop a solar hub capable of powering 45,000 homes.

CSIRO and Abnegoa, one of the world's pre-eminent solar companies, have partnered to develop advanced solar storage to provide energy at any time, day or night.

All these technologies promise not just to reduce emissions by "up to 25%" but to eliminate them!

Battery technology for storage is well-advanced and prices dropping daily. There is also the possibility of "off river" pumped hydroelectric energy storage. We can provide baseload with a diversified mix.

Australia is lagging behind the rest of the world in genuine commitment to the control of emissions and pollution, this is to the detriment of those living near mines and coal-fired generators.

It is time for governments of every persuasion to recognise that the future lies in zero, not just "reduced", emissions and to let go of the obsession with coal and gas.

We owe this to our populace, our commitment to the Paris agreement, our future generations and, most importantly, our conscience!

Households will benefit from the lower cost of renewables, and increased security that renewables can provide through distributed networks and microgrids. Australians will benefit from the safer jobs, and from the environmental and health benefits of cleaner air and water. These benefits will also flow to vulnerable and low income households. However, policy should explicitly ensure that these households are not further disadvantaged, particularly as people experiencing disadvantage will be first and worst impacted by climate change – another reason why effective climate change policy is necessary and provides many co-benefits.

Rural and regional areas receive a high proportion, 30-40%, of the investment in renewables, and these projects bring jobs to the area and offer farmers additional revenue streams. They also bring the possibility of replacing jobs in mining fossil fuels with jobs in a cleaner and healthier industry. The transition to clean energy will also reduce the health burden of burning fossil fuels, which is primarily borne by rural and regional areas. Renewables can also provide more distributed and therefore reliable energy, with lower costs for rural and remote communities, who traditionally pay much higher prices than their urban counterparts. Further, climate change disproportionately affects rural and regional communities with extreme weather stress and agricultural impacts. Mitigating climate change will reduce the impacts rural communities based on agriculture face.

J Gillie